



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/729,353	12/05/2000	Theresa M. Knox	52493.000047	6721

7590 11/18/2004

Jennifer A. Albert, Esq.  
Hunton & Williams  
Suite 1200  
1900 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20006

EXAMINER
----------

JEANTY, ROMAIN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3623

DATE MAILED: 11/18/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/729,353

Applicant(s)

KNOX ET AL.

Examiner

Romain Jeanty

Art Unit

3623

*[Handwritten signature]*

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 July 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 8-19 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILED ACTION**

1. This communication is in response to the Restriction Requirement filed on July 30, 2004. The election with traverse of claims 1-7 in Paper No. 21 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that a first expert receiving a question is recited in each independent claim. This is not found persuasive because the examiner has identified that three of the four groups are classified under different class and subclass based on the claimed subject matter. In this instance, the examiner would be required to perform separate and different searches. Therefore, since the examiner would be required to perform separate and different prior art searches and since the groups are classified under different class and subclass, a substantial burden would fall on the examiner if all the claims are examined. The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

**Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101**

2. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

3. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

As an initial matter, the United States Constitution under Art. I, §8, cl. 8 gave Congress the power to "promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and

Art Unit: 3623

discoveries". In carrying out this power, Congress authorized under 35 U.S.C. §101 a grant of a patent to "[w]hoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition or matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof."

Therefore, a fundamental premise is that a patent is a statutorily created vehicle for Congress to confer an exclusive right to the inventors for "inventions" that promote the progress of "science and the useful arts". The phrase "technological arts" has been created and used by the courts to offer another view of the term "useful arts". See *In re Musgrave*, 167 USPQ (BNA) 280 (CCPA 1970). Hence, the first test of whether an invention is eligible for a patent is to determine if the invention is within the "technological arts".

Further, despite the express language of §101, several judicially created exceptions have been established to exclude certain subject matter as being patentable subject matter covered by §101. These exceptions include "laws of nature", "natural phenomena", and "abstract ideas". See *Diamond v. Diehr*, 450, U.S. 175, 185, 209 USPQ (BNA) 1, 7 (1981). However, courts have found that even if an invention incorporates abstract ideas, such as mathematical algorithms, the invention may nevertheless be statutory subject matter if the invention as a whole produces a "useful, concrete and tangible result." See *State Street Bank & Trust Co. v. Signature Financial Group, Inc.* 149 F.3d 1368, 1973, 47 USPQ2d (BNA) 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1998).

This "two prong" test was evident when the Court of Customs and Patent Appeals (CCPA) decided an appeal from the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences (BPAI). See *In re Toma*, 197 USPQ (BNA) 852 (CCPA 1978). In *Toma*, the court held that the recited mathematical algorithm did not render the claim as a whole non-statutory using

Art Unit: 3623

the Freeman-Walter-Abele test as applied to *Gottschalk v. Benson*, 409 U.S. 63, 175 USPQ (BNA) 673 (1972). Additionally, the court decided separately on the issue of the "technological arts". The court developed a "technological arts" analysis:

The "technological" or "useful" arts inquiry must focus on whether the claimed subject matter...is statutory, not on whether the product of the claimed subject matter...is statutory, not on whether the prior art which the claimed subject matter purports to replace...is statutory, and not on whether the claimed subject matter is presently perceived to be an improvement over the prior art, e.g., whether it "enhances" the operation of a machine. *In re Toma* at 857.

In *Toma*, the claimed invention was a computer program for translating a source human language (e.g., Russian) into a target human language (e.g., English). The court found that the claimed computer implemented process was within the "technological art" because the claimed invention was an operation being performed by a computer within a computer.

The decision in *State Street Bank & Trust Co. v. Signature Financial Group, Inc.* never addressed this prong of the test. In *State Street Bank & Trust Co.*, the court found that the "mathematical exception" using the Freeman-Walter-Abele test has little, if any, application to determining the presence of statutory subject matter but rather, statutory subject matter should be based on whether the operation produces a "useful, concrete and tangible result". See *State Street Bank & Trust Co.* at 1374. Furthermore, the court found that there was no "business method exception" since the court decisions that purported to create such exceptions were based on novelty or lack of enablement issues and not on statutory grounds. Therefore, the court held that "[w]hether the patent's claims are too

Art Unit: 3623

broad to be patentable is not to be judged under §101, but rather under §§102, 103 and 112." See *State Street Bank & Trust Co.* at 1377. Both of these analysis goes towards whether the claimed invention is non-statutory because of the presence of an abstract idea. Indeed, *State Street* abolished the Freeman-Walter-Abele test used in *Toma*. However, *State Street* never addressed the second part of the analysis, i.e., the "technological arts" test established in *Toma* because the invention in *State Street* (i.e., a computerized system for determining the year-end income, expense, and capital gain or loss for the portfolio) was already determined to be within the technological arts under the *Toma* test. This dichotomy has been recently acknowledged by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences (BPAI) in affirming a §101 rejection finding the claimed invention to be non-statutory. See *Ex parte Bowman*, 61 USPQ2d (BNA) 1669 (BdPatApp&Int 2001).

*In the present application, the preamble of the claim recites a test plan review process for verifying a test plan for implementing a request for service. However, the body of the claim does not recite verifying any test plan. Therefore, claim 1 does not produce a useful, concrete and tangible result. Furthermore, the claim recites no structural limitations (i.e., computer implementation). None of the steps in the body of the claim indicates any connection to a computer or technology. The steps of "preparing, scheduling, identifying, conducting, receiving, recording, sending, reviewing, incorporating and filing" could be performed manually by a person without use of technology means.*

Art Unit: 3623

From this it can be seen that the broadest reasonable equivalent disclosed fails to pass the first and second prong test and therefore recites non-statutory subject matter under 35 USC 101.

Claims 2-7 depend from independent claim 1; therefore are rejected under the same rationale.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1 recites "a technologist and a scribe and a user". It is unclear as to what is the function of the technologist, the scribe, and the user in the claim. Applicant is suggested to amend the claim to recite what function is for the technologist and the scribe. Appropriate action is required.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the

Art Unit: 3623

applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

7. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Barnard et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,714,915)

As per claim 1, Barnard et al discloses a method for assessing, preparing, designing, developing, deploying and supporting procurement system comprising: preparing a plurality of test plan review documents, scheduling a test plan review, identifying and notifying each of a plurality of participants of the scheduled test plan review, wherein said participants include a facilitator, a test plan author, making the test plan review documents electronically available to the test plan review participants, conducting the test plan review, receiving any proposed changes to the test plan review documents resulting from the conducted test plan review, recording the proposed changes to the test plan review documents on a test plan review results form, sending the test plan review results form to the facilitator, reviewing the test plan review results form with the test plan author, incorporating the test plan review results from the test plan review results form in the test plan, and filing the test plan review results form (col. 25, line 6 through col. 30, line 35; col. 36, lines 26-29).

As per claim 2, Barnard et al further disclose wherein the step of preparing the test plan review documents is conducted by the test plan author using a plurality of test plan document templates electronically available in a project public folder of a computer memory; and following the step of preparing the test plan review documents, the process further includes the step of sending the test plan review documents to a project leader at a



Art Unit: 3623

site where the test plan review will take place (col. 1, lines 48-61; col. 25, lines 57-67).

As per claim 3, Barnard et al further disclose wherein said facilitator reviews the test plan review documents before conducting the test plan review, and leads the conducting of the test plan review (col. 24, lines 54-67).

As per claim 4, Barnard et al et al further disclose wherein said technologist is a person familiar with a technology that is the subject of the request for service (col. 28, lines 15-46).

As per claim 5, Barnard et al further disclose wherein said scribe records the proposed changes to the test plan review documents on the test plan review results form and transmits the test plan review results form to the facilitator (col. 45, lines 35-40).

As per claim 6, Barnard et al further disclose wherein a project leader is responsible for obtaining official approval of the test plan, scheduling the test plan review and ensuring that test plan review checklists are completed and executed (col. 45, lines 29-32).

As per claim 7, Barnard et al further disclose wherein the user is a representative of a site where the test plan was written and is familiar with a business functionality of the request for service which is the subject of the test plan review (col. 5, line 47 through col. 8, line 32).

### **Conclusion**

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Romain Jeanty whose telephone number is (703) 308-9585. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs 7:30 am - 6:00 pm.

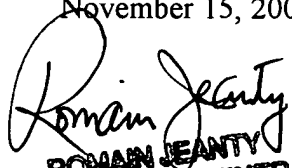
Art Unit: 3623

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq R Hafiz can be reached on (703) 305-9643. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

RJ

November 15, 2004

  
ROMAIN JEANTY  
PRIMARY EXAMINER  
*Art Unit 3623*